



EFFECT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Pallabi Saikia

Research Scholar, Department of Education, Gauhati University.

ABSTRACT

Violence against women and girls continues to be a global epidemic that kills, tortures, and maims – physically, psychologically, sexually and economically. It is one of the most pervasive of human rights violations. Violence is the intentional and extreme form of aggression such as use of physical force or power, threatened against individual, group or community, that causes injury, psychological and emotional harm, rape, torture and deprivation or death. Now-a-days violence affects the lives of women and girls in all socio-economic classes around the world. It cuts across cultural and religious barriers and takes a variety of forms. The present study tries to find out the various forms of domestic violence its causes and consequences and to study the effect of domestic violence on women empowerment.

KEY WORDS: Violence, Empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence, domestic abuse or spousal abuse occurs when a family member, partner or ex-partner attempts to physically or psychologically dominate another. Domestic violence often refers to violence between spouses, or spousal abuse but can also include cohabitants and non-married intimate partners. Domestic violence occurs in all cultures; people of all races, ethnicities, religions, sexes and classes can be perpetrators of domestic violence. Domestic violence is perpetrated by both men and women. In the Indian patriarchal setup, it became an acceptable practice to abuse women. There may be many reasons for the occurrence of domestic violence. From a feminist standpoint, it could be said that the occurrence of domestic violence against women arises out of the patriarchal setup, the stereotyping of gender roles, and the distribution of power, real or perceived, in society. In general, men are believed to be stronger than women and more powerful. They control women and their lives and as a result of this power play, they may hurt women with impunity.

The protection of women from domestic violence, or the domestic violence act is a laudable piece of legislation that was enacted in 2005 to tackle this problem. The Act in theory goes a long way towards protection of women in the domestic setup. It is the first substantial step in the direction of vanquishing the questionable public/private distinction traditionally maintained in the law, which has been challenged by feminists time and again. Admittedly, women could earlier approach the courts under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) in cases of domestic violence. Violence affects the lives of millions of women worldwide, in all socio-economic and educational classes. Generally there are three forms of Domestic violence like sexual violence, verbal and emotional abuse and economic violence.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To study the various forms of domestic violence, its causes and consequences.
2. To study the effect of domestic violence on women empowerment.

Research Methodology:

The methodology confined to secondary sources of data available in books, articles and internet materials.

Domestic Violence In India

In India where almost half of the population are women, they have always been ill-treated and deprived of their right to life and personal liberty as provided under the constitution of India. Women are always considered as a physically and emotionally weaker than the males, whereas at present women have proved themselves in almost every field of life affirming that they are no less than men due to their hard work whether at home or working places. Behind closed doors of homes all across our country, people are being tortured, beaten and killed. It is happening in rural areas, towns, cities and in metropolitans as well. It is crossing all social classes, genders, racial lines and age groups. It is becoming a legacy being passed on from one generation to another. But offences against women which reflects the pathetic reality that women are just not safe and secure anywhere. According to a latest report prepared by India's National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), a crime has been recorded against women in every three minutes in India. Every 60 minutes, two women are raped in this country. Every six hours, a young married woman is found beaten to death, burnt or driven to suicide.

Here are few tables to represent cases registered under some form of domestic violence.

Table: 1.1: Cases Reported (I), Victims(V) & Rate (R) of Crimes Committed Against Women During 2015

S. No.	State/UT	Cruelty By Husband Or His Relatives (Section 498-A IPC)		
		I	V	R
1	Andhra Pradesh	6121	6129	23.9
2	Arunachal Pradesh	66	66	10.7
3	Assam	11225	11225	71.5
4	Bihar	3792	3835	7.6
5	Chhattisgarh	620	623	4.9
6	Goa	19	19	2.1
7	Gujarat	4133	4134	14.0
8	Haryana	3525	3541	28.3
9	Himachal Pradesh	226	226	6.6
10	Jammu & Kashmir	400	400	6.8
11	Jharkhand	1654	1676	10.2
12	Karnataka	2732	2743	8.9
13	Kerala	3668	3684	20.2
14	Madhya Pradesh	5281	5281	14.3
15	Maharashtra	7640	7645	13.5
16	Manipur	39	39	3.1
17	Meghalaya	44	44	3.2
18	Mizoram	9	10	1.8
19	Nagaland	4	4	0.4
20	Odisha	3605	3608	17.2
21	Punjab	1583	1584	11.9
22	Rajasthan	14383	14383	41.6
23	Sikkim	2	2	0.7
24	Tamil Nadu	1900	1908	5.5
25	Telangana	7329	7329	40.3
26	Tripura	501	502	27.0
27	Uttar Pradesh	8660	8660	8.5
28	Uttarakhand	407	407	7.9
29	West Bengal	20163	20169	44.6
	TOTAL STATE(S)	109731	109876	18.4
30	A & N Islands	14	14	5.3
31	Chandigarh	126	126	17.6
32	D&N Haveli	2	2	1.0
33	Daman & Diu	3	3	2.8
34	Delhi UT	3521	3521	37.9
35	Lakshadweep	2	2	4.9
36	Puducherry	4	4	0.5
	TOTAL UT(S)	3672	3672	32.4
	Total(ALL INDIA)	113403	113548	18.7

S. No.	State/UT	Dowry Deaths		
1	Andhra Pradesh	174	174	0.7
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0.0
3	Assam	216	216	1.4
4	Bihar	1154	1154	2.3
5	Chhattisgarh	89	89	0.7
6	Goa	0	0	0.0
7	Gujarat	12	12	0.0
8	Haryana	243	245	1.9
9	Himachal Pradesh	2	2	0.1
10	Jammu & Kashmir	6	6	0.1
11	Jharkhand	267	271	1.6
12	Karnataka	254	254	0.8
13	Kerala	8	8	0.0
14	Madhya Pradesh	664	665	1.8
15	Maharashtra	268	268	0.5
16	Manipur	0	0	0.0
17	Meghalaya	1	1	0.1
18	Mizoram	0	0	0.0
19	Nagaland	0	0	0.0
20	Odisha	356	356	1.7
21	Punjab	85	85	0.6
22	Rajasthan	463	463	1.3
23	Sikkim	1	1	0.3
24	Tamil Nadu	65	65	0.2
25	Telangana	262	263	1.4
26	Tripura	28	28	1.5
27	Uttar Pradesh	2335	2338	2.3
28	Uttarakhand	54	54	1.0
29	West Bengal	498	499	1.1
	TOTAL STATE(S)	7505	7517	1.3
30	A & N Islands	0	0	0.0
31	Chandigarh	5	5	0.7
32	D&N Haveli	1	1	0.5
33	Daman & Diu	0	0	0.0
34	Delhi UT	122	122	1.3
35	Lakshadweep	0	0	0.0
36	Puducherry	1	1	0.1
	TOTAL UT(S)	121	121	1.1
	TOTAL (ALL INDIA)	7634	7646	1.3

Forms of Domestic Violence (Domestic Violence Act 2005):

There are three forms of Domestic Violence according to Domestic Violence Act 2005.

- Sexual abuse
- Emotional and Verbal abuse
- Economic abuse

Sexual abuse:

Sexual abuse is any situation in which force or threat is used to obtain participation in unwanted sexual activity. Sexual violence is a common and serious public health problem affecting millions of people each year throughout the world. It is driven by many factors operating in a range of social, cultural and economic contexts. At the heart of sexual violence directed against women is gender inequality.

Sexual abuse includes:

- Forced sexual intercourse.
- Forcing someone to entertain other against his/her will.
- Abusing, humiliating, degrading others.
- Rape within marriage.
- Rape by strangers
- Sexual abuse of mentally or physically disabled people
- Forced for abortion

Emotional abuse:

Emotional abuse is defined as any behaviour that threatens, intimidates, undermines the victim's self-worth or self-esteem, or controls the victim's freedom. This can include threatening the victim with injury or harm, telling the victim that they will be killed if they ever leave the relationship and public humiliation. Verbal abuse is a form of emotionally abusive behaviour involving the use of language. Verbal abuse can also be referred to as the act of threatening.

Economic abuse :

Economic violence includes not providing food, cloths, medicine etc. for their children, preventing his wife from accessing or using any part of the house, preventing or obstructing her from carrying on her employment, non- payment of rent in case of a rented accommodation, selling her valuable belongings without her consent, forcibly taking away her salary etc.

Causes of Domestic Violence:

There are several causes of domestic violence such as lack of economic resources underpins women's vulnerability to violence and their difficulty in extricating themselves from a violent relationship. The link between violence and lack of economic resources and dependence is circular. On the one hand, the threat and fear of violence keeps women from seeking employment, or, at best, compels them to accept low-paid, home-based exploitative labour. And on the other, without economic independence, women have no power to escape from an abusive relationship. Lack of legal protection, particularly within the sanctity of the home, is a strong factor in perpetuating violence against women.

- Women's economic dependence on men.
- Dissatisfaction with the dowry from wife.
- Arguing with the partner.
- Refusing to have sex with the partner.
- Neglecting own children.
- Not cooking properly .
- Extra marital affairs and not looking after in-laws.
- Infertility in females.
- Desire for a male child
- Use of alcoholism by the partner.
- Going out of home without telling the partner.
- Lesser legal knowledge of women either by written law and/or by practice.
- Domestic violence is not taken seriously.

Consequences of Domestic Violence :

The impact of violence on women's mental health leads to severe and fatal consequences. Battered women have a high incidence of stress and stress-related illnesses such as post-traumatic stress syndrome, panic attacks, depression, sleeping and eating disturbances, elevated blood pressure, alcoholism, drug abuse, and low self-esteem. For some women, fatally depressed and demeaned by their abuser, there seems to be no escape from a violent relationship except suicide. Perhaps the most crucial consequence of violence against women and girls is the denial of fundamental human rights to women and girls. International human rights instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted in 1948, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted in 1989, affirm the principles of fundamental rights and freedoms of every human being. Following are some effects of Domestic Violence-

Physical Health Effects:

The injuries, fear, and stress associated with violence can result in chronic health problems to women as a result of which they were not able to do their daily activities in a better way to raise their income .

Mental Health effects:

Depression and stress disorder are the most prevalent mental health problems of domestic violence. These are mainly associated with emotionally abusive behaviours such as prohibiting a woman from seeing her family and friends, economic restrictions such as preventing a woman from working, or confiscating her earning and other controlling behaviour, fear and stress due to physical abuse and forced sex . Alcohol and drug abuse are the other mental health sequelae seen in battered women in industrialized countries.

Effect on Domestic Violence on Empowerment of Women:

Women can suffer from violence throughout their "life cycle" as fetuses may be aborted just because they are female, girls may be neglected or subjected to various other types of abuse, adolescents may be raped, married women may be beaten, raped or killed by their husbands and widows may be neglected. Women are the worst sufferer of the world's victim as a result of which women loss interest in household activities.

Effect of Domestic Violence on empowerment of women are as given below:

- Domestic violence affects the productivity level of the victim women.
- Women need to spend their part of income for medical care at serious attack of domestic violence.
- Some women leave their job immediately after first serious attacks and her survival becomes difficult and painful when they have to work hard for earning two meals a day.
- In case of employed women they fail to work with full capabilities in workplace.
- An emotionally harassed and depressed woman may lose interest in the occu-

pation she is associated with.

- In cases of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), women leads them to maintain a distance from their partner which affected their life adversely. Many of them seek separation or file for divorce and in either of the case the children are the worst sufferer.

Conclusion:

Violence against women within the family is a global phenomenon. However its ramifications are more complex and its intensity much greater in India. The most pathetic aspect of such atrocities is domestic violence. Domestic violence is a significant problem all over the world which adversely affects the health and safety of millions of women throughout their lifespan. Such an assault is also termed as intimate partner violence. Domestic violence is one of the crimes against women which is linked to their disadvantageous position in the society. Therefore domestic violence is recognized as the significant barriers of the economic empowerment of women. A nation's progress and prosperity can be judged by the way it treats its women folk. Therefore women should be encouraged to organised themselves such as women's group, self- help group or N.G.O's. It can be effectively used as an instrument to mobilise the women folk. Some successful women's organisations can also act as catalytic agents for encouraging women's participation in social and political activities. Women status mainly depends on their rights and privileges and the roles assigned to them. Status is determined in terms of socio- economic indicators such as income, property, education and skills that open up opportunities of employment. One can not hope gender equity unless women have a share in the decision making process in the family and in the public sphere. Efforts to help women empower themselves through vocational training, employment opportunities and social groups need to consider the potential unintended consequences for these women, such as an increased risk of domestic violence.

REFERENCES:

1. Violence, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violence>
2. Violence, <http://www.apa.org/topics/violence/index.aspx>
3. Violence, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/violence>
4. Innocent Digest .no.6, (2006), "Domestic Violence Against Women and girls", <http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/digest6e.pdf>.
5. UNFPA India Country office (2007) "Coordinated responses to violence against women, a documentation of intervention" <http://india.unfpa.org/drive/CoordinatedresponsetoVAW.pdf>
6. Women & Child Development Ministry of Human Resource Development Govt. of India 92005) "A situational analysis of domestic violence against women in kerala", New Delhi.
7. Anne Marie Golla, Anju Malhotra, Priya Nanda, and Rekha Mehra (2011) "Understanding and Measuring Women's Economic Empowerment Definition, Framework and Indicators"
8. Women's economic empowerment The OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET): promoting pro-poor growth: the role of empowerment – © oecd 2012
9. Women's Human Rights in North- East India, IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (JHSS) ISSN: 2279-0837, ISBN: 2279-0845. Volume 3, Issue 4 (Sep-Oct. 2012), PP 34-37.
10. Hakimi M et al .(2001) Silence for the sake of harmony: domestic violence and women's health in central Java. Yogyakarta, Gadjah Mada University.
11. National Crime Records Bureau's official Website (<http://ncrb.nic.in>).